

Reading Achievement and the Importance of Parental Involvement

A Special Project

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FACULTY APPROVAL

Reading Achievement and the Importance of Parental Involvement

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ABSTRACT

The researcher explored methods to further involve parents in reading to improve MAP reading scores. The purpose was to determine if parent involvement through a reading log had a positive effect on student reading scores. Students from the study and control groups were given a MAP assessment before the study, at the beginning of the second trimester and in the winter, and scores were tabulated. Given the analysis of the data and the testing of the null hypothesis, a limited number of findings became apparent. The researcher determined that no conclusions could be drawn from this study and that this study needed to be conducted again with more precise guidelines.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Background for the Project

In 2001, a law was created titled No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The purpose of this law was to ensure that all students were meeting standards. This law also held teachers accountable for teaching these standards, and passing state assessments. Title 1 funding was federal funding that focused on providing money for lower income schools in need of academic improvement, based on assessments.

Schools receiving Title 1 funding were required to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), where student performance must improve. Adequate Yearly Progress focused on math, reading, or both based on assessments. There was a five step improvement process that schools were expected to undergo if they did not meet AYP, one being the first step and five the last step before a major reform of the school.

An elementary school in south central Washington State was at step four under Title 1 funding for math and reading for the 2013-2014 school year, and did

not meet AYP. If the elementary school continued failing to meet AYP it would eventually reach improvement step five.

This fact was what brought about the reason for this study. After examining student needs in order to be more successful in reading, the researcher decided to approach reading instruction through a homework reading log strategy to involve parents more to see if it had an impact on overall reading scores and fluency.

Statement of the Problem

For the 2013-2014 school year, in the school district where this study took place, and after administering the High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE) test, only 64% of students in the 3rd grade met their literacy standard. Similarly, upon entering kindergarten, 65% of students scored below grade level for the WaKids test district-wide. The elementary school did not meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and had reached step four for their Title 1 funding. Students across the district and at the elementary school were not achieving at state expectation levels especially when considering the subject of literacy. Literacy was without a doubt an area that was in need of improvement and some kind of change. Increasing parental involvement with literacy at home was believed to be crucial in helping to improve student reading scores.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this study was to determine if parent involvement through a reading log had a positive effect on student reading scores. Another purpose was to see if a reading log would improve student's ability to decode and read with fluency. Lastly, with the use of a survey, this study helped determine whether the involvement of parents helped in boosting attitude and self-esteem towards reading.

Delimitations

This project was delimited to one 2nd grade class at an elementary school in south central Washington State. The project was conducted during the 2015-2016 school year with 21 students. There were two groups of students being examined, the study group and the control group. These two groups were determined after the completion of the study. The study group consisted of 8 students, 4 girls and 4 boys. The study group was made up of students who completed their reading log 80% of the time. The control group consisted of 13 students, 9 girls and 4 boys. These students failed to complete the reading log as required. The elementary school had an enrollment of 650 students on the September 2014 child count. The ethnicity of the school was American Indian/Alaskan Native/Asian/Pacific

Islander: 2%, Black: 1%, Hispanic: 49%, and White: 48%. The percentage of students who qualified for Free and Reduced-Priced Meals was 81% (OSPI, 2014).

The reading log included daily recording of time read as well as basic skills related to literacy, decoding words, fluency, and accuracy. The focus of the reading log was to give parents a way to keep track of their student's reading as well as a focus point while doing so. Students were told to read with a parent/guardian or adult for a minimum of 20 minutes, four times a week, while focusing on a given skill.

Each student was assessed by the use of the MAP assessment. The MAP was a required state assessment in which the students responded to literacy-based questions electronically on the computer. This assessment was administered three times during the course of the school year, once in the fall before the study began, again in the winter and finally at the end of the year in the spring. Based on the data from the assessment, the researcher compared reading scores between the study group and the control group.

Assumptions

For this study it was assumed that all 2nd grade students in the classroom where the study was conducted were able to read. Secondly, it was assumed that all parents would participate in the reading log and actively encourage their students to read. A third assumption was that the students would have access to books at the correct reading level. A fourth assumption was that the scores on the subsequent MAP assessments were higher than they were on the pretest. Yet another assumption was that the students in this study would increase their overall reading ability after participating in the reading log. Finally, this study assumed that all students were able to read with more confidence and less anxiety than they had before participating in the reading log, which a survey at the end of the course should be able to show.

Hypothesis/ Research Question

The hypothesis was that students in a 2nd grade classroom with parents committed to the involvement of a weekly reading log assignment prepared by the researcher received higher reading scores than students whose parents were not committed to the involvement of a reading log assignment. Students whose parents participated in the weekly reading log assignment also improved in their

ability to decode new words and in fluency. The research question asked whether students who participated in the weekly log project reported that they were more confident while reading, and that parent involvement with reading had increased at home.

Null Hypothesis

Students in a 2nd grade classroom with parents committed to the involvement of a weekly reading log assignment prepared by the researcher did not receive higher reading scores than students whose parents were not committed to the involvement of a reading log assignment. Students whose parents participated in the weekly reading log assignment also did not improve in their ability to decode new words and in fluency.

Significance of the Project

The purpose of this project was to provide a factual base of information regarding parental involvement at home with reading and its effects on student reading scores and abilities, which were reflected by assessments administered through the MAP assessment. The results of this study were to be shared with staff and administration at the elementary school where the study was conducted in order to determine if there was a significant difference that reading logs had on

the students' confidence and overall ability to read while taking the MAP reading assessment. A discussion took place regarding a decision to implement reading logs in additional classrooms to enhance reading performance at the elementary school where the study was conducted.

Procedure

For the purpose of this project, the following procedures were implemented. Permission to conduct research at the elementary school where the study took place was granted by the principal. A review of selected literature was conducted at Heritage University as well as using internet search engines. Students from the study and control groups were given a MAP assessment before the study began. Scores from the MAP assessment were tabulated and shared among the 2nd grade team. The reading log was introduced to all students and parents/guardians of the study and control groups in the 2nd grade classroom.

At the beginning of the second trimester the researcher administered the MAP assessment to the study and control groups. Scores were tabulated of the trimester MAP assessment and shared among 2nd grade staff. Progress was discussed. In the winter the researcher administered the MAP assessment to the study and control groups. The scores of the final MAP posttest were tabulated and shared with their

grade staff. The study and control groups were determined based on parent participation. The researcher found the difference in growth between the pretest and the posttest MAP scores and compared scores from September to January for both groups, study and control.

Upon the completion of their trimester, the study and control groups were given a survey with regards to their feelings towards reading, and their skills used as well as their confidence in this subject. Findings of the survey were tabulated and presented. The researcher analyzed the data from the MAP assessment, and data was used for a statistical analysis using a t-test to determine the significance of the study. A conclusion was drawn in relation to using a reading log and performance in reading according to the Common Core State Standards. Results of this study were shared with parents, staff and administration at the elementary school during a staff meeting. A discussion took place regarding a decision to implement reading logs in additional classrooms to enhance reading performance at the elementary school where the study was conducted.

Definition of Terms

Adequate Yearly Progress. This was the yearly measurement of student progress measured by the Measure of Student Progress (MSP) and Smarter Balance Assessment (SBA).

Common Core State Standards. Common Core State Standards were an initiative in the United States that stated the information that students in grades kindergarten through 12th should have known in English language arts and mathematics at the end of each grade level.

English Language Learners. An English Language Learner was a student whose first language learned/ spoken at home was one other than English.

reading log. The reading log was a weekly homework assignment sent home by the researcher for parents to fill out with students, recording times that they had read with their child.

standardized assessments. Standardized assessments were tests that were administered, scored, and interpreted in the same way no matter where or when they were used (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009).

Acronym

AYP, Adequate Yearly Progress

CCSS. Common Core State Standards

ELL. English Language Learner

ESEA. Elementary and Secondary Education Act

HSPE. High School Proficiency Exam

MAP. Measures of Academic Progress

MSP. Measure of Student Progress

NCLB. No Child Left Behind Act

NSBA. National School Boards Association

OSPI. Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

SBA. Smarter Balance Assessment

CHAPTER 2

Review of Selected Literature

Introduction

Academic success had long been an ultimate goal of teachers, administrators, and at the state level. There had been various laws implemented in an effort to help students be more successful. No Child Left Behind along with Title 1 funding were both created to give financial funding to struggling schools in lower income areas. In the south central part of Washington State, there was a large population speaking primarily Spanish as their first language. For this reason, bilingual instruction was very common in this area. Lastly, there was a large variation in levels of parental involvement in south central Washington State schools. Investigating the levels of parental involvement to determine their effectiveness was a topic of interest.

No Child Left Behind

In 1965, a law was passed with the intention of providing funding for lower income families with students attending primary and secondary schools. This federal law was named the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or ESEA. The ESEA had been revised and reinstated seven times, and later in 2001 it was

renamed No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Through all of the revisions it had, its main goal was to assist in “improving the educational opportunities for children from lower income families” (McCann, 2012, p.1). The NCLB law’s main focus was on teacher accountability and testing. NCLB created laws that states needed to test students in grades 3-5, 6-8, and 10-12 in reading, mathematics and science. Schools were also required to report test scores publicly. Similarly, schools needed to meet Adequate Yearly Progress or AYP, which was designed individually by each state. Teachers instructing in the NCLB law were required to be highly qualified in the subject area that they were teaching.

“Although NCLB is an outgrowth of the standards movement at the national level, it in fact incorporates only one part-the accountability part-of what was intended to be a far more positive, constructive, and comprehensive approach to raising the achievement of all students” (Dee & Jacob, 2010, p.204). While some studies had shown benefits of NCLB, these results were not seen throughout all schools. NCLB was a hot topic that was under constant scrutiny from teachers, administrators, and parents alike.

While many saw the benefits of NCLB, many disagreed. “It encourages educators to set aside best practices in favor of “teaching to the test” and

contradicts much of what we know from the research” (Rushton & Juola-Rushton, 2008, p.87). A frequent struggle many teachers reportedly encountered in their instruction was that, while teaching information that was crucial for students to learn, they continued worrying about testing. Many standardized tests that were given in schools across the United States occasionally determined many important factors for teachers and students, from high school graduation to teacher salary. Critics also reported that results of test scores were not always consistent, stating “interpretations about the progress of students and schools that are limiting and often inaccurate” (Ho, 2008, p.351).

Although the NCLB was viewed in a negative light by some, it was implemented with the goal to support lower income families with improved education. Many times, students in lower income areas struggled on a daily basis with many school-related expenses that a student in a middle-class area would take for granted. Lower income area students often did not have access to internet, technology, or even current textbooks. NCLB was implemented in an attempt to provide funding for these schools in need, in an attempt to level the playing ground.

Bilingual Instruction

Incorporating multiple languages into one classroom had many names: dual language, immersion, as well as bilingual instruction. While all of these types of instructions provided teaching in multiple languages, they all differed in the method in which they were taught. Bilingual instruction was the teaching or use of two languages during school.

Some goals for bilingual education could include: “to teach English, fostering academic achievement, acculturating immigrants to a new society, preserving a minority groups linguistic and cultural heritage, enabling English speakers to learn a second language, and to develop national language resources” (Wan, 2015, p.1). Many studies over the years found that English Language Learner (ELL) students learning their first language along with English were more successful than those simply learning English. While these programs were not always offered everywhere that they were needed, the locations that did offer them saw positive results.

Students who were able to read in their native language tended to be more successful reading in their second language as well. A strong first language helped students make connections in their second language, which often was crucial

while learning a new language. “The reason that students taught in their first language read better in their second language, the author says, is no doubt because of “transfer”—literacy and other skills and knowledge seem to transfer across languages, according to the research” (Goldenberg, 2008, p.1). Understanding the necessity to use phonemic awareness while spelling out a word in their first language, for example, also applied to the similar skill while spelling in English. Being successful in these skills in their first language similarly gave students more confidence while working in their second.

While there had been various studies on the effects of bilingual education, one study concluded that “It is not surprising that the linguistic development of bilingual children is different from that of their monolingual peers, but increasing evidence shows that nonverbal cognitive development is also affected by bilingualism” (Barac & Bialystok, 2012, p.413). Also, in the same study, it was shown that Spanish-English bilinguals performed higher than Chinese-English bilinguals and monolinguals because there was a large similarity between the English and Spanish languages. While many continued to argue against teaching languages other than English in schools, many studies had shown benefits in doing so.

Title 1 Funding

Title 1 funding was a federal program that focused on providing funding to students and schools struggling academically. Title 1 was a part of the No Child Left Behind act, and funding was provided to schools who qualified for funding based on standardized testing. Similarly, higher poverty levels in the school and area were an additional requirement to qualify for Title 1 funding. “Schools with 15% or more of children in poverty may be selected as Title I schools. Those with 40% or more can operate schoolwide programs. Those with 75% or more must receive Title I funds” (Pearson Education, 2015, p.1). Administrators were required to submit a plan of improvements that would be made in order to assist struggling students to increase test scores. Title 1 funding was created with the intention of “closing the gap between low-income and other students” (NSBA, 2015, p.1).

Similar to the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), this was federal funding directed specifically towards improving the academic performance of low income students. “The success of Title 1 in improving test scores offers important insight into the effectiveness of school-based compensatory funding in general, such as weighted student funding within districts

or state compensatory aid across districts” (Weinstein, Stiefel, Schwartz, & Chalico, 2009, p.3). Title 1 focused on the various needs of struggling students in low income areas. Teachers receiving Title 1 funding were required to be highly qualified in their area of teaching. Supplemental materials were purchased and schools worked diligently to find interventions to help students meet standards.

Although Title 1 had flaws, it had “allocated \$13.9 billion in FY 2008, reaching over half the public schools in the country and almost 17 million students” (Weinstein et al., 2009, p.4), making it the fourth largest federal funding provided for low income families, and the largest available to schools. While this amount of money being provided to schools was an enormous amount, often, school administrators were not able to decide how to allocate their funding. What was clear was that any money allocated was required to be used for the academic benefit of the students.

Grants and allocations were available to low-income schools who meet outlined credentials. While many students living in poverty were at risk, there was not always a correlation between the two. “Much of the educational dialogue surrounding students at risk focuses on factors, such as poverty or visible minority status, which, in and of themselves do not automatically entail risk” (MacMahon,

2011, p.199). Title 1 funding continued modifying its funding to ensure that it was effectively fulfilling the needs of students and schools.

Parental Involvement

“Parents who are more involved have more opportunities to learn from other parents and teachers about school procedures, ways to enhance their children’s education at home, extracurricular opportunities, and ways to handle difficult situations, thereby increasing social capital” (Ryan, Casas, Kelly-Vance, & Ryalls, 2010, p.3). Without a doubt, parental involvement played a positive role with regards to student achievement, for both monolingual and bilingual students. Focusing on students enrolled in a bilingual program, “leading scholars of many types of immersion programs have long considered parents in those programs to be very supportive, and empirical research has shown that their involvement has helped to grow, flourish, and remain sustainable” (Wesely & Baig, 2012, p.314).

In another study, it was discussed how “parents’ educational involvement is positively related to two indicators of school functioning: academic self-competence and academic achievement” (Toren, 2013, p.634). Toren continued discussing that there were different types of parent involvement. There were “home-based” and “school-based” involvement. In home-based involvement, it

referred to parents or guardians who were involved in their child's school work at their home. School-based involvement referred to a parent who stayed in contact with the teacher, or volunteered in activities at the school. Later, Toren stated that "parents' educational involvement has been defined in a number of ways, but has consistently shown to positively affect children's achievement, regardless of its form" (Toren, 2013, p.634). This demonstrated that any kind of parent involvement was better than none.

In some cultures, education was viewed as the sole responsibility of the teacher, and parents need not be involved. Researchers found that often "low-income parents believe their role is to support teachers' educational decisions rather than to initiate activities or intervene in their children's education more directly" (Ryan et al., 2010, p.3). Not all parents, especially those coming to the U.S. from a different country, were accustomed to or aware of the expectations held by teachers.

A significant component of parental involvement was also a result of the action of the teacher. Often "low-income and minority parents often perceive teachers and principals as demanding a great deal from them and offering little in return" (Jeynes, 2011, p.38). Many times teachers expected parents to

automatically become involved in their child's education, without showing a real interest in the family.

Also, establishing a positive communication with parents helped foster parent involvement. Jeynes continued explaining that instead of focusing on the negative and what parents were failing to do, teachers should recognize what they were doing correctly. "Ultimately, schools must acknowledge that they cannot alone ensure a child's success in school, but schools working with parents and communities can help students achieve success" (Jeynes, 2011, p.39). While all parents may not have agreed on the academic components required to help their child succeed in school, most all parents wanted their children to be successful, as shown in a study where "Latino parents strongly value education and have high expectations for their children" (Ryan et al., 2010, p.392). Teachers needed to find ways to make connections with parents for the success of their students.

Summary

The researcher believed that No Child Left Behind, bilingual instruction, Title 1 funding, and parental involvement all played an important role in the literacy success of students in the south central Washington State area where this study took place. No Child Left Behind together with Title 1 funding worked to provide

needed dollars to struggling schools. While simply receiving money would not solve the problem of lower literacy test scores in areas of poverty, it helped provide teachers and administrators with the necessary tools to work towards this goal. Often times in areas of low-income, students' first language was not English. This affected the success of these students in school. Many schools had implemented different forms of bilingual instruction to best accommodate the students that they were working with to help them be successful. Regardless of where a child attended school, it was crucial that parents be actively involved in one way or another.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology and Treatment of the Data

Introduction

For this project, a reading log was sent home weekly to encourage parents to read with their student each night. A MAP test was administered before and after the study was conducted. Also, a survey was given to students before and after the study to determine how their feelings towards reading had been affected. The scores shown from the MAP test as well as the survey helped the researcher decide whether or not students had made growth in their reading or not.

Methodology

This project was a correlational research study. Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009) stated that “correlational research involves collecting data to determine whether, and to what degree, a relation exists between two or more quantifiable variables” (p. 9). For this study, the researcher compared reading scores and performance of students whose parents had worked at home with them on reading skills to parents who had not worked with their students. The researcher implemented a reading log requiring parents to read with their students for a minimum of 20 minutes every night.

In addition, data was collected from the MAPS assessment. Both assessments were quantitative. Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009) explained that “quantitative research is the collection and analysis of numerical data to describe, explain, predict, or control phenomena of interest” (p. 7). The data that was collected was used to determine whether parental involvement with reading had a positive effect on student reading achievements.

Also, students were given a set of research questions to answer both before and after the study took place. The research questions investigated how comfortable students were with reading and if they enjoyed it. The results of these questions demonstrated the qualitative research data that was collected.

Participants

This project was delimited to one 2nd grade class located in south central Washington State. The project was conducted during the 2015-2016 school year with 21 students. The group of 21 2nd grade students was predetermined. Therefore, this study group fell into the category of a quasi-study. There were 4 girls and 4 boys in the study group. In addition, 9 girls and 4 boys in the control group. The south central elementary school in Washington State had an enrollment of 650 students on the September 2014 child count. The ethnicity of

this elementary school was American Indian/Alaskan Native/Asian/Pacific Islander: 2%, Black: 1%, Hispanic: 49%, and White: 48%. The percentage of students who qualified for Free and Reduced-Priced Meals was 81% (OSPI, 2014).

Instruments

The MAP assessment, aligned with the CCSS, was assessed once each season in the 2015-2016 school year. The MAP assessed student abilities to read and comprehend text.

The MAP assessment was valid and reliable. According to Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009) they discussed that uncontrolled extraneous variables that affected the performance on the dependent variable were the threats to the validity of the experiment. The MAP assessment was administered in the same testing environment each trimester. The research questions were used twice, before and after the reading log was used. The researcher prepared the questions that were used to show how students felt after participating in reading logs and their overall attitude about reading.

Once the data was collected, a statistical t-test was conducted to determine the validity of the study. The researcher used a computer program created by Microsoft named Excel to collect data as well as to analyze it.

Design

The design of this study used a QUAN-Qual model. A QUAN-Qual model was defined in which “quantitative data are collected first and are more heavily weighted than qualitative data” (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009, p. 463). In this study, the MAP test and data collected from the reading log served as evidence for the quantitative data. The survey given to the students before and after the study provided the qualitative data.

Procedure

For the purpose of this project, the following procedures were implemented. Permission to conduct research at the elementary school where the study took place was granted by the principal. A review of selected literature was conducted at Heritage University as well as using internet search engines. Students from the study and control groups were given a MAP assessment before the study began. Scores from the MAP assessment were tabulated and shared among the 2nd grade

team. The reading log was introduced to all students and parents/guardians of the study and control groups in the 2nd grade classroom.

At the beginning of the second trimester the researcher administered the MAP assessment to the study and control groups. Scores were tabulated of the trimester MAP assessment and shared among 2nd grade staff. Progress was discussed. In the winter the researcher administered the MAP assessment to the study and control groups. The scores of the final MAP posttest were tabulated and shared with their grade staff. The study and control groups were determined based on parent participation. The researcher found the difference in growth between the pretest and the posttest MAP scores and compared scores from September to January for both groups, study and control.

Upon the completion of their trimester, the study and control groups were given a survey with regards to their feelings towards reading, and their skills used as well as their confidence in this subject. Findings of the survey were tabulated and presented. The researcher analyzed the data from the MAP assessment, and data was used for a statistical analysis using a t-test to determine the significance of the study. A conclusion was drawn in relation to using a reading log and performance in reading according to the Common Core State Standards. Results

of this study were shared with parents, staff and administration at the elementary school during a staff meeting. A discussion took place regarding a decision to implement reading logs in additional classrooms to enhance reading performance at the elementary school where the study was conducted.

Treatment of Data

The data gathered from the post-study survey were calculated and examined using Microsoft Excel. Student responses from the survey were numerically shown on a scale from 4 to 1. All information from the surveys were represented in Microsoft Excel using graphs. Also, data was graphed using information gathered from MAP reading test results. From tables entered onto Microsoft Excel, graphs were created to analyze and review the results from both the survey and MAP results.

Summary

This chapter was designed to review the methodology and treatment of data related to the implementation of at-home reading logs and parental involvement. This project used a quasi-study action research using a QUAN-Qual design. The researcher compared scores of students who completed the weekly reading log to the scores of the students who did not. The researcher wanted to find out if the

reading log and participation of parents in reading had an impact on the reading scores and overall confidence while reading for students.

The MAP assessment was administered once each trimester during the 2015-2016 school year. The pre-test was given in the first two weeks of the school year. Next, students were assessed in November and the final posttest was given at the end of January. Qualitative data from the post-study survey was collected using the Likert Scale. Once all data was collected, the researcher analyzed data using Microsoft Excel using data tables and graphs.

CHAPTER 4

Analysis of the Data

Introduction

An elementary school in south central Washington State was at step four under Title 1 funding for math and reading for the 2013-2014 school year, and did not meet Adequate Yearly Project (AYP). If the elementary school continued failing to meet AYP it would eventually reach improvement step five. There was a need for change to increase student reading scores.

This fact was what brought about the reason for this study. After examining student needs in order to be more successful in reading, the researcher decided to approach reading instruction through a homework reading log strategy to involve parents more to see if it had an impact on overall reading scores and fluency.

Description of the Environment

This project was delimited to one 2nd grade class located in south central Washington State. The project was conducted during the 2015-2016 school year with 21 students. There were 4 girls and 4 boys in the study group. There were 13 students in the control group, 9 girls and 4 boys. The elementary school had an enrollment of 650 students on the September 2014 child count. The ethnicity of

the elementary school was American Indian/Alaskan Native/Asian/Pacific Islander: 2%, Black: 1%, Hispanic: 49%, and White: 48%. The percentage of students who qualified for Free and Reduced-Priced Meals was 81%.

Hypothesis/ Research Question

The hypothesis was that students in a 2nd grade classroom with parents committed to the involvement of a weekly reading log assignment prepared by the researcher received higher reading scores than students whose parents were not committed to the involvement of a reading log assignment. Students whose parents participated in the weekly reading log assignment also improved in their ability to decode new words and in fluency. The research question asked whether students who participated in the weekly log project reported that they were more confident while reading, and that parent involvement with reading had increased at home.

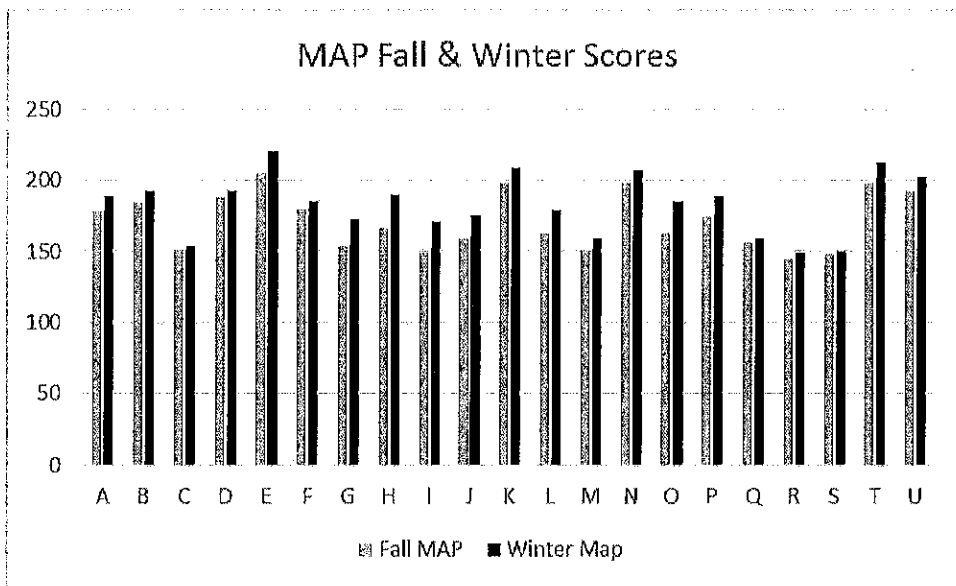
Null Hypothesis

Students in a 2nd grade classroom with parents committed to the involvement of a weekly reading log assignment prepared by the researcher did not receive higher reading scores than students whose parents were not committed to the involvement of a reading log assignment. Students whose parents participated in

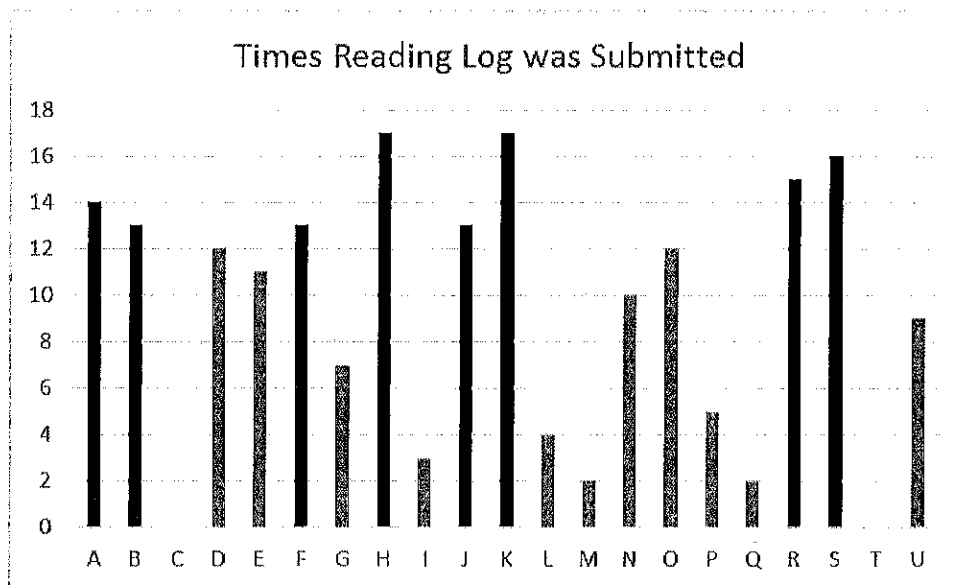
the weekly reading log assignment also did not improve in their ability to decode new words and in fluency.

Results of the Study

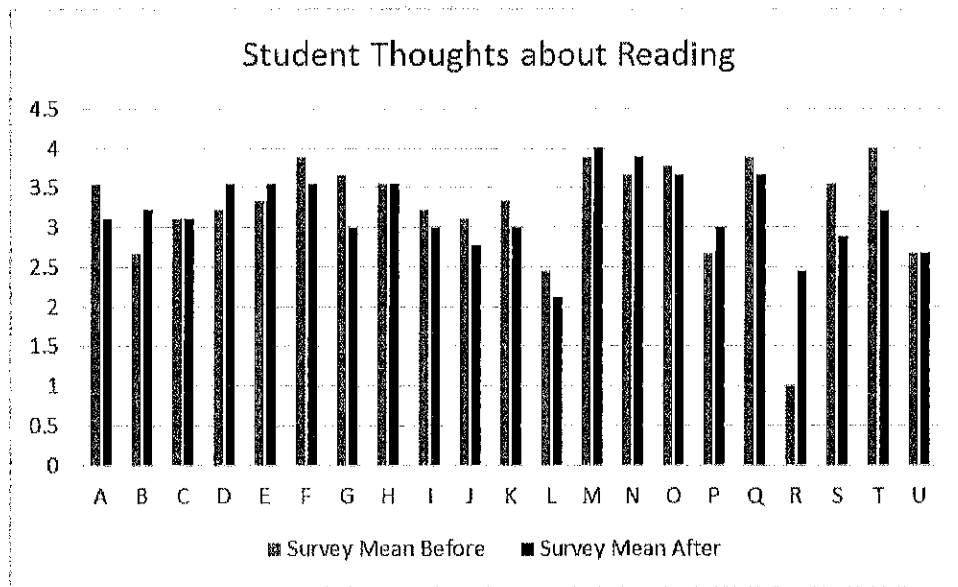
A statistical analysis using a comparative bar graph was used to analyze the results of the MAP fall and winter scores. The MAP state grade level goal for reading in the fall was 175 and for the winter was 184. All students, both in the control and study group, made some sort of growth. The highest score for reading in the winter was 220. The lowest score in the winter was 149. All students in the study group made growth in reading MAP scores, as did all students in the control group.



A weekly reading log was sent home for students each week. Parents were requested to read a minimum of 20 minutes each day during the week and fill out the reading log. Out of 21 students, 8 students completed the weekly reading log 80% of the time during the study. Other students came close to meeting the 80% requirement, but did not. The data was graphed to show students who turned in the reading log completed, a minimum of 13 times. Students who submitted the reading log 13 times or more were placed in the study group. Students who failed to submit the reading log 13 times were assigned to the control group.



A survey to determine students' responses to the research question was given, data was tabulated and a graph was developed. The results of the data was used to find the mean scores both before and after the study took place. A side-by-side bar graph was used to compare mean scores in the fall before the study and after the study in the winter.



Findings

Given the analysis of the data and the testing of the null hypothesis or answering the research question, a limited number of findings became apparent. While the students in the study group did make growth in their MAP reading

scores after the reading log was used, the control group made growth as well.

Neither the hypothesis nor the null hypothesis were proven correct. Based on the data, there was no correlation between these two factors. Reviewing reading log data, it was obvious that many parents did not fill out this form on a regular basis. Less than half of the students did so on a regular basis. The results of the survey data proved to be most inconclusive. Some students had improved feelings on the topic of reading, while some students had a lower score with regards to reading.

Discussion

One reason that all students made growth may have been because some students may have been reading without filling out the reading log. Another possible factor was that all students were given a baggy book each day. A baggy book was a book sent home each day for all students. Students filled out information about the book on a form, and returned it the next day. The baggy book was a routine created for all 1st and 2nd grade students. Finally a possible reason for improvement could have been a result of successful teaching.

Possibly, many families were reading with their students without recording it. Similarly, because there was a homework form under the reading log, many parents may have filled out the homework form and skipped the reading log. A

reason for this may have been that they simply did not understand how to properly fill out the survey. While the survey was explained and given in steps, it may have been the first time students had filled one out. One observation was that a few students circled fours for every response, which may have meant they did not understand how to properly complete the form. Some students did have improved feelings towards reading out of the study group, but some did not. After reviewing all data, the study results proved to be inconclusive in either direction.

Summary

This chapter was designed to analyze the data and identify the findings. The researcher believed that sending home a weekly reading log would improve student performance on MAP reading tests, as well as overall feelings towards reading. From the data, the hypothesis was neither supported nor not supported. Similarly, the null hypothesis was neither accepted nor rejected. After completing the study, the findings were inconclusive. The data did not support the hypothesis or the null hypothesis, as the data showed growth from all students. While students did make growth after completing the reading log, all students made growth and not simply students in the study group. For this reason it was impossible to reach a conclusion based on the data that was gathered.

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

The researcher was interested in knowing how to improve student reading scores. The researcher believed that parent involvement played a role in reading scores, and increasing the involvement at home would have a positive effect. The researcher implemented a weekly reading log to encourage parents to read with their students at home. This chapter provided a review of the study of parent involvement and its effect on reading scores with conclusions and recommendations on how to improve reading scores and student feelings towards reading.

Summary

The study was conducted when the researcher determined that reading scores in a south central Washington State school needed improvement. Parental involvement was not adequate, and an area that needed improvement as well. “Ultimately, schools must acknowledge that they cannot alone ensure a child’s success in school, but schools working with parents and communities can help students achieve success” (Jeynes, 2011, p. 39). A reading log was created to

encourage parents to read each night with their students, and potentially improve their reading scores. Student progress was tracked before and after the study using MAP testing. Reading logs were collected, and the researcher determined the study and control groups based on whether or not students had consistently submitted completed reading logs. Finally, students were given a survey to determine their feelings with regards to reading. After completing this study, once again students were given the same survey to determine whether or not students felt more confident and positive about reading.

Conclusions

After reviewing all of the data that was collected, the researcher determined that no conclusions could be drawn from this study. While students who consistently turned in their reading logs did make some growth on their MAP reading score, all students in both the study and control group made some growth. One possible reason that there was no direct correlation between MAP reading scores and the reading log was the format of the student's homework. On the cover of the homework packet was a place for parents to sign off on weekly student reading. Various parents signed this form instead of the reading log.

Also, at the school in which the study was conducted, a program titled “baggy books” was created. Each day during the week students were sent home with a book to be read and returned to receive another. Students consistently were given opportunities to read at home, and many resources were provided for them. For these reasons, it is possible that all students made growth as almost all students had a parent reading with them at home as well, without filling out the reading log. Finally, it is possible that the researcher was very successful in instructing all students in reading during class and for this reason all students made growth.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the researcher believed that this study needed to be conducted again. Research did not confirm or reject the hypothesis as originally stated. For this reason, it was very possible that the reading log did cause growth in reading of students, but other factors also may have played roles. A similar study should be conducted, being clearly explained to the parents of these students with strict guidelines on how to complete the reading log. Also, the reading log would need to be the only place in which parents could record the reading at home. With these recommendations implemented, a clearer outcome could be determined from this study.

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APPENDIX

Elementary 2nd grade Student Survey

I want to know more about how you feel about reading! Please select one answer for each question by circling it. Thank you for your help!

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4	3	2	1

At School

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I like to read. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Reading is hard. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. I know how to pick a book that is right for me. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. I like to read to my friends. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. I have a favorite book. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. I know how to read new words | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4	3	2	1

At Home

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7. I read at home. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. There is someone at home to read with. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. I like it when someone reads to me. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. Someone at home reads to me. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |